



Invitation to Tender:

Provide a bespoke Blended Finance Plan for the Landscape Recovery Pilot Project 'North Norfolk: Wilder, Wetter, Better for Nature'

Contact:	James Fisher
Address:	Norfolk Coast Partnership, Unit 7A Bayfield Brecks, Holt, NR25 7DZ.
Reference:	NNLR-Blended Finance Plan
Tender issued:	14 June 2024
Deadline for questions	19 July 2024
Tender deadline for return:	26 July 2024
Tender interviews (if required):	02 August 2024
Anticipated award date*:	09 August 2024
Period of contract:	August 2024 – June 2025

*This date will be brought forward if interviews are not held.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Environment
Agency



Landscape Recovery



Project Partners

Norfolk Coast Partnership

The Norfolk Coast National Landscape (NL) is a protected landscape located along the coastline of Norfolk, England. The NL is comprised of 451 km² of intertidal, coastal and agricultural land and is characterised by remarkable natural landscapes. The Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP) forms part of the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape team, hosted by Norfolk County Council. It exists to oversee, manage and enhance the NL on behalf of the four local authorities within its boundaries.

Norfolk Rivers Trust

Norfolk Rivers Trust (NRT) is a conservation charity whose mission is to restore, protect and enhance the water environments of Norfolk for people and wildlife. NRT have extensive experience of working with a wide range of organisations including farmers, landowners, water companies, government bodies and the third sector, as well as the general public.

Holkham Estate

Set across 25,000 acres on the north Norfolk coast, Holkham aims to be the UK's most pioneering and sustainable rural estate. A team of experts in conservation, farming, forestry and gamekeeping come together to drive forwards exemplary land management supporting habitats and wildlife. Holkham have demonstrable success in visitor management, all abilities access to nature and landscape interpretation.

Project Stakeholders

North Norfolk Coastal Group

The North Norfolk Coastal Group (NNCG) is an umbrella organisation of farmers, landowners, and trusts working with government agencies and local authorities involved in land and waterway management across much of North Norfolk. NNCG was set up to aid collaboration between landowners and land managers so together they can work to improve the biodiversity of the managed environment while farming or managing the land profitably and sustainably.

Norfolk County Council

Norfolk County Council (NCC) is the Responsible Authority for delivering Local Nature Recovery Schemes (LNRS) across Norfolk, in close collaboration with Suffolk. NCC also hosts the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS), the Norfolk Non-Native Species Initiative and the Norfolk Historic Environment Record.

University of East Anglia

Professor Paul Dolman leads a team of experts in biodiversity conservation in human-modified landscapes, who delivered a Biodiversity Audit across the North Norfolk coast in collaboration with NNCG and the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape team. The Audit worked to define priorities and ecological requirements across multiple taxa to define effective conservation action at a landscape scale.

Natural England

Natural England (NE) work to conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment, providing expert advice to the government, partners and stakeholders on conservation and nature recovery. Local Area Advisors hold a key role in providing detailed knowledge of species, habitat and land managers within the area and providing technical advice on habitat creation and management, advice on environmental aims, outcomes, monitoring, and surveys, and on protected sites.

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency (EA) works to create better places for people and wildlife and support sustainable development. The EA is an executive non-departmental public body which is part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The Environment Programme Team in East Anglia manage and deliver Water Environment Improvement Fund projects (WEIF), for example: river restoration, habitat creation, tree planting, improving fish passage, natural flood management and coastal projects. The Environment Agency works in partnership with other organisations and supports the Catchment Based Approach.

Landscape Recovery - Pilot Project **North Norfolk: Wilder, Wetter, Better for Nature**

Defra has developed three new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) that will reward environmental management and are designed to support the rural economy whilst achieving the goals set out within the [25 Year Environment Plan](#) and a commitment to net zero emissions by 2050.

- the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) will pay farmers to adopt and maintain sustainable farming practices that can protect and enhance the natural environment alongside food production, and support farm productivity (including by improving animal health and welfare, optimising the use of inputs and making better use of natural resources).
- Countryside Stewardship (CS) will pay for more targeted actions relating to specific locations, features, and habitats. There will be an extra incentive through CS Plus for land managers to join up across local areas to deliver bigger and better results.
- Landscape Recovery will pay for bespoke, longer-term, larger scale projects to enhance the natural environment.

North Norfolk: wilder, wetter, better for nature is one of 22 First Round pilot projects approved by Defra under Landscape Recovery. The project is led by a partnership consisting of Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape, Norfolk Rivers Trust and the Holkham Estate. The project was approved under (and contributes to) the two themes within the Landscape Recovery Scheme:

- 1) Species Recovery (administered by Natural England)
- 2) River Restoration (administered by the Environment Agency)

The Project Development Phase (PDP) commenced in January 2023 and is required to be completed by June 2025. On successful completion of the PDP and Defra approval, the project will advance to a 20+ year Implementation Phase.

This transformative, landscape scale project is designed to be land-manager led, supported by a cross-sector public-private partnership. It aims to work closely with 67 land managers to create 5,096 hectares of entirely new wildlife habitat within the Norfolk Coast AONB, from land currently managed for agriculture. The project extends along the North Norfolk coastal strip, from Hunstanton to Weybourne and along five chalk rivers/streams the Hun, Stiffkey, Glaven, Burn and Weybourne Beck.

The project is underpinned by a [Biodiversity Audit of the Norfolk Coast](#) conducted by researchers at the University of East Anglia, which takes an evidence-based approach to conservation and nature recovery. Through close working with site managers and expert taxonomists, a series of important actions for land managers were developed to support the full range of key species in the area.

The project is strategic, aiming to connect a pre-existing habitat mosaic of designated sites, reserves and land currently managed for nature across the project area, through informed land use change and management actions. In this way, the project will create/ link more than 23,000 hectares of space for nature i.e. creating habitat that is bigger, better, and more joined-up.

Through this innovative landscape scale approach, significant areas of habitat will be created to maximise opportunities to increase species diversity and allow threaten species to recover. This will provide essential ecosystem services including improvements to water quality and quantity, natural flood management, soil protection, carbon sequestration and climate resilience. This project will also deliver important social benefits including improvements to health and wellbeing, access to nature, education and employment opportunities and sustainable tourism opportunities.

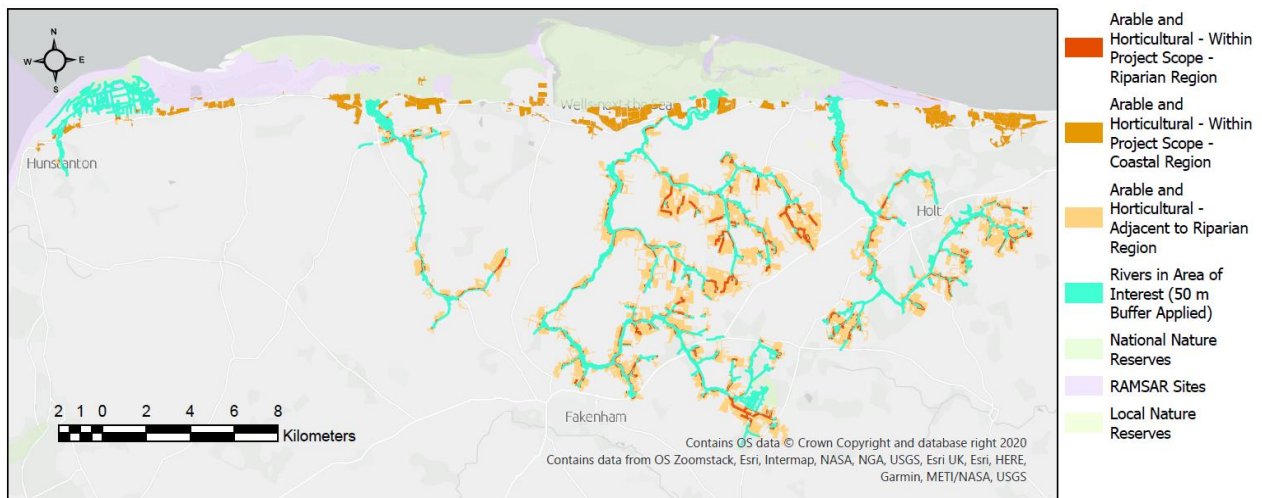


Image 1: Project location

Statement of Requirement

The Landscape Recovery PDP Handbook explains that *“blending public funds, private investment and third sector funding can result in an increase in the total amount of money supporting nature’s recovery, while also allowing public funds to be used more strategically”*. This Handbook includes full details of what should be included in the Blended Finance Plan; we would expect the appointed consultant to ensure the pilot project meets the requirements as set out in this document.

The partners are requesting a written tender response for the following services:

Provision of a bespoke Blended Finance Plan for the North Norfolk Landscape recovery Project incorporating:

- i) **Business Model** that describes how to raise capital and generate revenue to cover the costs of the Project at the Implementation Phase along with the identification of markets and buyers of ecosystem services and
- ii) **Financing Model** that identifies potential investors and suitable financing instruments.

Working in close collaboration with the project partners and other stakeholders, this should include:

- An analysis of the project’s products, goods and services to feed into the business plan.

- A mapping exercise to identify all private and public finance opportunities available to the project, both on project start-up and delivery over 20+ years; and identification of potential buyers and/or investors.
- Identification of available upfront capital and opportunities for lump sum payments vs. year-on-year investment, as well as opportunities for tax incentives and returns required.
- Identification of any criteria or evidence for investment which the project will be expected to meet and/or deliver against.
- Identification of mechanisms and timings for triggering investment and payments
- Supporting the project to understand how potential buyers/investors align with our ethical fundraising policy and green credentials.
- A full analysis of risks and constraints and quality guarantees.
- Working with project partners and relevant stakeholders, secure funding, acting as broker and negotiator on behalf of the project partners.

Please note, the project will be appointing a solicitor to provide legal support services to work alongside the successful blended finance consultancy to ensure the appropriate legal framework for implementation is agreed and to check that the finance plan is legally compliant.

Your proposal should also outline:

1. Details of staff allocated to the project, along with details of their relevant experience in carrying out similar projects. The project manager/lead contact should be identified.
2. A breakdown of each person who will be working on the project - what their day rate is and how many days each member of the team will be allocated to complete the work.
3. A timescale for example, in the form of a Gantt chart, for carrying out the project steps/phases.
4. An overall cost for the work, **broken down into staged payments**. We will agree and invoice in stages to support an iterative process as the project progresses and we incorporate learning.
5. If you plan to sub-contract any of the steps or tasks (please provide details).
6. A list of your accreditations and networks.

Case studies and references

As part of your tender, please provide case studies to showcase your experience with similar projects, along with written references.

Presentation of reporting

The outputs of each phase should be captured in writing as the project progresses and provided as stage reports to support stage payments and evidence gateway delivery.

Communication with project partners

- Monthly meetings with the project partners and written progress updates are required as a minimum. More frequent check-in meetings may be scheduled as needed. Meetings may be face-to-face or online, however up to six in person meetings will be required throughout the

contract period. This will include one start -up meeting, two mid-point meetings, two presentation workshops and a final presentation / workshop and closing meeting.

- The successful candidate will be expected to take on board feedback from project partners as part of an iterative process and implement the agreed actions of the project partners.
- All findings will need to be presented in the form of a final report and presentation to the project partners.

Timeline for delivery

We will be seeking a final draft version of the Blended Finance Plan to be prepared by December 2024, with a likely need for ongoing input into the Project until June 2025.

<p>August - September 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract commences. Information gathering, planning and preliminary meetings with project team. • Project timeline and approach confirmed between supplier and project team. • Work with the project partners and relevant stakeholders to develop draft business model. • Carryout an analysis of the project’s products, goods and services to feed into the business model.
<p>October – November 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working with the project partners and relevant stakeholders to complete a bespoke business model. • Develop and produce draft financing model for project start-up and year-on-year delivery. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A mapping exercise with relevant partners to identify all private and public finance opportunities available to the project, both on project start-up and delivery over 20+ years; and identification of potential buyers and/or investors. ○ Identification of available upfront capital and opportunities for lump sum payments vs. year-on-year investment, as well as opportunities for tax incentives and returns required. ○ Identification of any criteria or evidence for investment which the project will be expected to meet and/or deliver against. ○ Identification of mechanisms and timings for triggering investment and payments. • Supporting the project to understand how potential buyers/investors align with our ethical fundraising policy and green credentials. • Carry out a full analysis of risks and constraints and quality guarantees. • Produce a report of findings and deliver a presentation of findings to all project partners. • Lead workshop with land managers and relevant stakeholders to explore and agree options.

December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final draft versions of Business Model and Financing Plan presented to project partners.
January 2025 – March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued exploration of available finance sources. Work with the project partners to refine business model and blended finance plan, based on feedback from initial presentation. Work with the project partners and appointed legal bodies to provide assistance with developing a governance model and legal contracts and secure funding, acting as a broker and negotiator as required. Business model and financing plan complete. Final report produced and presented to all project partners.
March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final iteration of Business Model and Financing Plan presented to all project partners, including land managers.
April – June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the project partners and appointed legal bodies to provide assistance with developing legal contracts and secure funding acting, as a broker and negotiator as required. Engagement with Defra* to explore payment mechanism options. Final reports produced and presentation delivered to all partners. All contracts in place and funding secured. End of contract (with scope for extension if required).

*Defra has indicated that they expect to be engaged in the delivery of the blended finance plan as part of the pilot scheme’s wider learning and development. The consultant will be expected to liaise directly with Defra to this end.

Invitation to Tender Management

The contract will be awarded to the supplier which best meets the requirements of the project, whilst offering good value for money and demonstrating relevant experience. The budget must allow for all project-associated costs (e.g. travel and accommodation for meeting attendance if necessary).

We will score your proposal based on the following criteria:

- Meeting the project requirements as set out in the Invitation to Tender (50%)
- Value for money (25%)
- Demonstrable experience in the following areas (25%):
 - Developing successful business models or innovative approaches to business startups or project development.
 - Securing finance from a variety of sources.
 - Working with project partners and appointed legal bodies to develop and secure legal contracts.
 - Working with the private and public sector, including farmers and land managers.

Any questions must be supplied by email to James Fisher james.fisher@norfolk.gov.uk by Friday 19th July 2024. Responses will be supplied within one working week.



Fees and Payment

Upon award of this contract, a purchase order will be issued by Norfolk Rivers Trust. Staged payments will be made upon completion of each agreed stage, subject to satisfactory performance and completion of tasks. The details and format of payment can be agreed upon completion of the invitation to tender process.